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Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada | Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

Building Canada's food and agriculture brand in the world

Canada's agriculture and food industry feeds the world safe, healthy food that is well-respected by international trading partners. Canada is the world's fourth-largest exporter in the agriculture and seafood trade, and is internationally recognized for high quality products.

Manitoba's Contribution

Much of the agricultural region of southern Manitoba is the flood plain of the Red and Souris rivers. The productivity of these deep fertile soils is at the heart of the province's agri-food industry. Agricultural exports from Manitoba are valued at $4.7-billion, and most of them are bound for the U.S. which takes more than 70 per cent of all the province's exports.

Agri-Food

Wheat is Manitoba's top agri-food export and accounts for 21 per cent of agri-food exports by value. Beyond livestock feed, there is more to wheat than to be milled into flour for baked goods. The grain is also used for brewing beer and distilling vodka, and as a raw material for biofuel.

In second place is canola seed which is used for oil extraction in international markets and represents 11.6 per cent of provincial exports, and in third place canola or colza oil and its fractions account for 9.5 per cent of exports. The oil is used in many applications, such as margarine and as an additive in mineral oil, or a raw material for biodiesel.

Potatoes are Manitoba's fourth-largest agri-food export, and the province is Canada's second-largest potato producer after Prince Edward Island. There is more to this tuber than to be sliced, diced or mashed. The versatile potato finds its way into many products, including alcohol, starches, pharmaceuticals and biodegradable plastics.

Fishery

Not many people outside the province are aware of the province's commercial fishing industry. Walleye (pickerel), whitefish and sauger are the most sought-after species in Manitoba's commercial fishery and account for about 33 per cent of Canada's annual commercial catch of freshwater fish. The Manitoba fishery earns about $25-million in annual sales that are primarily exports. Cedar Lake, Lake Manitoba, Lake Winnipeg and Lake Winnipegosis have the largest commercial fisheries. Sturgeons are taken commercially from the Nelson River.

Did you know?

In 1974, Manitoba-born Baldur Stefansson developed Tower, the first variety of canola. Developed from rapeseed, an industrial oil source that grew well on the Prairies, the new variety was a major breakthrough because it can be eaten by humans. The potential for the food industry was immediately recognized, and the name canola was coined, meaning "Canadian Oil." Of the cooking oils, canola is lowest in saturated fat, high in cholesterol-lowering mono-unsaturated fat and the best source of omega-3 fats, and is in growing demand worldwide.

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